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RES Grad Program Handbook

a brief guide to life in IRES

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Getting Started

Before you arrive

1. Review [IRES checklist](#) for incoming students.
2. Review UBC Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies' (G+PS) [Checklist for Newly Admitted Graduate Students](#).
3. Sign up for an online Pre-Arrival webinar (facilitated by G+PS). Click here for [upcoming webinars](#).
4. Clear any G+PS Conditions of Admission in your online application. All information on this, including instructions, can be found through your application portal. Clearing these conditions of admission are also outlined in your G+PS offer letter).
5. Order one set of official transcripts and send to the RES Graduate office. These official original transcripts will be kept on file for the duration of your program in IRES.
6. Apply for on-campus or off-campus housing. For more information, please [click here](#). To apply, please click [here](#).
7. If you are new to Vancouver, please review the G+PS page on [Life in Vancouver](#).
8. Register for courses. For information, please click [here](#). *Registration for courses is not possible until your conditions of admission have been cleared (all required official documents are received by the G+PS office).
9. Discuss with your supervisor what [awards](#) to apply for.
8. Apply for [medical insurance](#).

When you arrive

1. Attend the available [orientation events](#) on campus.
2. Attend the IRES Annual Celebration (usually in the first week of classes).
3. Apply for a UBCcard at <http://ubccard.ubc.ca/>. The UBCcard will be both your student ID and your library card, so make sure to pick it up early! You can apply for your UBCcard once you are registered in courses.
4. Acquire your [U-Pass/Compass Card](#), which provides unlimited bus, SeaBus, SkyTrain, and Canada Line transit services within Metro Vancouver. It is assessed as part of your student fees.
5. Activation of UBC card for access to AERL building: Once you have your UBC card, please see the RES Program Support (Bonnie Leung in AERL 429) to arrange your card activation for access to the AERL doors and the AERL elevator after hours. The AERL Building is open Monday to Friday 7:30am to 5:00pm. It is closed on the weekends. Once your card is activated, tap your card on the black box located on the doorframe to unlock the door. Tap your card on the black box inside the elevator to access after regular office hours.
6. Keys: The RES Program Support will order you an office key, which opens the three doors that lead in to the IRES student area. You will receive an email from the UBC Bookstore when the key is ready for pickup.
7. Assignment of an IRES desk: Each new student is assigned a desk in the IRES student area. At each desk is a monitor, a keyboard and a mouse. There are no desktop computers provided. Most students have a non-window desk. North facing window desks are reserved for senior PhD students. Please [click here](#) for the IRES desk policy.
8. UBC email: Students can email the RES Program Support to request an IRES email (name@ires.ubc.ca). Note: Your email will automatically de-activate once you are no longer registered at UBC. Alternatively, UBC students can sign up for a UBC email forwarding address, name@alumni.ubc.ca. This address will be forwarded to an existing mailbox of your choice and you can keep that email address indefinitely. To sign up, please [click here](#).
9. Complete the required Bullying and Harassment Prevention Training and IRES Workplace Safety Orientation form and submit to the IRES Graduate Program Manager. For more information, please see the UBC Healthy and Safety section of this handbook.
10. Review and become familiar with the [G+PS list of deadlines for graduate students](#).

11. Set up your student profile on the IRES website. For instructions on how to set up your student profile, please see the below section on “Website Profiles.”

IRES information

Department equipment

There are some department equipment items that you can borrow from the RES Program Support for the day: Mac projector adapter, printing Ethernet adapter, portable projector, Mac power cord, poster tube, and pointer/slide advancer. See RES Program Support for more information.

Room Bookings

Students are welcome to book rooms for meetings. Please book rooms with the RES Program Support, Bonnie Leung (bonnie.leung@ubc.ca). You can also book one of our meeting rooms for a phone call (rooms 416, 419, 420, 435, 444).

Mailboxes

Each student is assigned a mailbox upon arrival. These can be found across from the west side Xerox machine (WC5945).

IRES Kitchens

There are two kitchens in IRES. You are welcome to use the shared dishes, cups and cutlery. Please wash your used dishes, cups and cutlery immediately. Do not leave them unwashed in the sink. There is a kettle, microwaves and a toaster oven at each kitchen, which everyone can use. Please cover your microwaved items to prevent spills in the microwave. Any spills need to be cleaned up immediately.

IRES Student Desk Area

The IRES student desk area is a silent study area. Please turn your cellphones to silent or vibrate. Please refrain from having long and loud conversations in the student desk area. Please take cellphone calls in the stairwells, in the student sofa lounge area, or in a meeting room. Do not have cellphone conversations in the IRES lobby or hallway as the noise disturbs staff, faculty and postdoc offices.

You are allowed to eat at your desk. Each IRES student desk has a blue paper recycling bin and a mini black garbage. It is the student's responsibility to empty both containers

into the Sort It Out bins by each kitchen. The mini garbage bucket should be emptied daily to prevent pests.

Xerox/Printing

We have two Xerox machines in our office: WC5945 (west side) and WC3655 (east side). Both machines print, scan and photocopy. Each student is assigned a code for printing, scanning and photocopying. The RES Program Support will email you a 4 digit access code as well as instructions on how to set up printing on your laptop. When printing, your wireless needs to be shut off and you need to be plugged into the Ethernet cable located under your desk. You cannot print on wireless.

Website Profiles

To add your profile to the IRES website, go to www.cms.ubc.ca. Log in with your CWL as a new user. Follow the instructions. Once you have completed the setup, please email Bonnie Leung (bonnie.leung@ubc.ca) using the same email you used for the setup. Bonnie will then send you an invitation to access the backend of the IRES website called "Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability." Once you accept the invitation, you can log into www.cms.ubc.ca using your CWL as a "user already." You will then be able to create your bio and upload a photo to post on the IRES website. You can update your bio and photo as often as you like.

International Students

International Student Guide

Review the International Student Guide at <http://students.ubc.ca/international>. It contains very important information regarding immigration, health insurance, working in Canada, taxes, and life beyond graduation.

If you have any questions related to your status as an international student, you can contact [International Student Advising](#) via phone or email. You can also drop by International House on campus to chat with an International Student Advisor (Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultants). Drop in hours and contact info can be found in the International Student Guide.

Student Visas

Persons who are not Canadian citizens or Permanent Residents require a Study Permit in order to enter Canada to study. Please [click here](#) for more information. You can also contact an International Student Advisor at isa@students.ubc.ca.

Medical Insurance

Medical Services Plan (MSP) is BC's provincial health insurance plan. Anyone living in BC for six months or longer (including international students) is required by law to enrol in MSP and pay the plan's premiums.

For an overview of BC Medical Services Plan, including information on how to apply for coverage, see [MSP for International Students](#). If you require help figuring out your medical coverage, contact MSP directly or [International Student Advising](#).

UBC Health and Safety

Bullying and Harassment Training/IRES Workplace Safety Orientation

The BC Government requires all UBC Faculty & Staff (including students employed by the University) to receive training about workplace bullying and harassment policies and requirements on how to recognize, prevent and address workplace bullying & harassment. To complete this training, please see [this page](#).

IRES also requires all students to complete the IRES Workplace Safety Orientation form, found on the [Forms and Policies](#) page of the IRES website. Please work with your supervisor to complete the form and submit to the IRES Graduate Program Manager by October 15 of your first term.

Safety on Campus

UBC has many different resources devoted to safety and security on campus. For more information, check out [AMS Safewalk](#), [Campus Security](#), [Graduate Student Safety](#), and the [Sexual Assault Support Centre](#).

Student Safety Abroad

UBC's Student Safety Abroad Program supports safe experiences abroad. The Program is based on the requirements outlined in [UBC's Student Safety Abroad Policy](#).

The policy applies to students traveling outside of Canada for University activity – this includes conferences, research, volunteering, service learning, varsity sports and studying abroad. For more information, please click [here](#).

Student Safety Abroad Registry

The Student Safety Abroad Registry is a mandatory component of your experience abroad. By taking 10-15 minutes to fill out the form, the Student Safety Abroad office will be able to act quickly to support you in case of an emergency.

For more information and to register, please click [here](#).

Health and Wellness

Check out [this page](#) to get connected to wellness resources on campus, including the [Wellness Centre](#), [health insurance information](#), [Counselling Services](#), and [Student Health Service](#).

Finances

Direct Deposit

There are two main routes through which you may receive funding during your RES degree:

Payments via your UBC Student Service Centre (SSC) account:

This normally includes university or external awards, as well as tuition coverage, if applicable.

Payments via UBC Payroll:

You will be paid through UBC Payroll for TA appointments, RA appointments, or stipends from faculty grants.

Both the SSC and UBC Payroll require separate direct deposit authorization forms to be completed and submitted in order to receive funding, so make sure to do this as soon as possible.

[SSC Direct Deposit](#)

[UBC Payroll Direct Deposit](#)

UBC Payroll

If you have been hired as a graduate research assistant (GRA), you will be paid twice a month. If you have been hired on an hourly appointment (such as a Work Study or a GAA); you will be paid on the 8th and the 23rd of the month (which is one week after timesheet submission). Hourly timesheets are solicited twice monthly, and your supervisor must be copied on your submission. Late submission of hours will result in

late pay, no exceptions, due to processing by Central Payroll. For more information, please [click here](#).

Departmental expense claim forms & travel claim forms

Your supervisor must sign requests, with original receipts attached before submitting to drop off box on the door of AERL Room 428. For IRES guidelines on miscellaneous and travel expenses and finance forms, please click [here](#).

UBC Faculty & Staff Self-Service

If you have been employed through UBC, you can sign up for the self-service portal to view and update your Personal and Payroll information. In order to sign up, you will need your birthdate, your employee number, and your PIN. You can request your employee number and your PIN from the department administrator. For more information please [click here](#).

Social Insurance Number (SIN)

All students working in Canada must have a Social Insurance Number (SIN). For information please [click here](#). International students can also contact [International House](#) to discuss how to obtain a SIN.

Awards/Funding

Award Opportunities

There are many award opportunities for RES Graduate Students, and we encourage students to discuss these with their supervisor before beginning their program.

Of particular note are the Tri-Agency/Affiliated competitions.

UBC G+PS holds its annual Tri-Agency/Affiliated Doctoral Competition in Winter Term 1, with application materials due usually in **mid-September**.

The annual Tri-Agency CGS M/Affiliated Fellowships (Master's) competition is also held in Winter Term 1, with application materials due by the **beginning of December**.

For more information on these and other available awards, please see the [RES Awards and Funding page](#), as well as the [G+PS award funding databases](#).

Please review top tips for completing funding applications, which can be found at the bottom of our [Awards & funding page](#).

Lastly, don't forget about the RES Student Travel Award and the G+PS Travel Award. Both of these awards are available on a once-per-program basis. Please see [here](#) for information on the RES Student Travel Award, and [this page](#) for the G+PS Travel Award.

Guidelines for Award Holders

For students that are award recipients, please review the [G+PS Awards holder's guide](#) for information.

Questions about how you will receive your award funding, when your awards will be assigned, and if you still have to pay tuition? Please see the [Awards FAQ page](#) on the G+PS website.

Your program

Program Requirements

All information on RES program requirements, both [PhD](#) and [Master's](#), can be found [here](#). Please review this information with your supervisor to ensure that you understand these requirements.

Course registration

Winter term course registration for graduate students usually opens in early June. You can find RES graduate course information [here](#). For courses outside of RES, please see the [SSC Course Schedule](#). The RES website also has a list of approved [methods courses](#) and popular [non-RES courses](#). If you have questions about non-RES courses, please direct these to the specific department offering the course.

Please remember that all RES students must register in the appropriate RES thesis course for every term of their program, including all summer terms:

RES 599 for master's students

RES 699 for doctoral students

UBC requires that all students remain continuously registered in the thesis course until their degree is completed, except when the student is away on an approved leave of absence. Failure to register for two consecutive terms may result in the student being required to withdraw. For more information on this policy, please see [here](#).

Supervisor Relations

Your supervisor(s) will be the key person and mentor in your graduate degree program, and good communication will play an important role in this relationship. A sample of questions you may ask your supervisor are:

Who should be on my research committee? Who calls supervisory committee meetings and how often?

How often do you anticipate us meeting?

What courses should I take?

Is there funding available for travel to conferences?

What types of award/fellowship/grant opportunities are there? What should I apply for?

What should my research proposal look like? What is my deadline to advance to candidacy?

Do I require ethics approval to conduct my research?

For information on the role of the supervisor, please [click here](#).

For information on your responsibilities as a graduate student, please [click here](#).

We encourage students and supervisors to use the [expectations document](#) as a guide for discussing their respective roles.

You are also welcome to speak to the Graduate Advisor or Graduate Program Staff about your program.

Supervisory Committee

For information on RES Supervisory Committee requirements, please see [this page](#). It outlines who can be on your committee, how many members your committee should have, how often your committee should meet, and supervisory committee responsibilities.

For information specific to RES master's students, please see [here](#). For information on RES doctoral student supervisory committees, please see [here](#).

RES students are required to submit a supervisory committee composition document when they have confirmed their committee. To access this form, please go to the [RES Forms and Policies](#) page on the IRES website.

Timeline

Before starting your program, we encourage all students to review the ideal timeline for their program. While we recognize that each student's program will be unique, these timelines will help you plan out your program and understand the milestones you are expected to complete along the way.

For the Doctoral Thesis Timeline, please see [here](#).

For the Master's Thesis Timeline, please see [here](#).

It may also be helpful to review the [G+PS Graduate Game plan](#), which guides students through the primary stages of their graduate education as well as provides advice for students on strategies for attaining academic and career success.

Policy 85: Scholarly Integrity

UBC is committed to providing an environment that supports the best research and scholarly practices and fosters researchers' abilities to act honestly, accountably, openly and fairly. [UBC Policy 85: Scholarly Integrity](#) makes clear the responsibilities and standards required of UBC researchers engaged in scholarly activity.

Other helpful guides you may want to check out include the [Intellectual Property Guide](#) and the [Research Ethics Guide](#).

Use of degree designations

Students in master's programs should not identify themselves as degree candidates (e.g., MA candidate) because candidacy is not an officially recognized degree program status at the master's level while it is at the doctoral level.

Students in doctoral programs may identify themselves as degree candidates only when they have been officially advanced to candidacy (by completing all required coursework, passing the comprehensive examinations, and having an approved dissertation proposal), and not before. This degree program status should be expressed in words (e.g., EdD candidate, PhD all-but-dissertation) and not using acronyms that might be misunderstood by non-academics. For more information, please click [here](#).

Graduate Program Forms and Policies

Throughout your program you will need to fill out many different forms, both RES specific and G+PS forms. Check out [this page](#) for more information.

Final Thesis and Dissertation submission (G+PS & cIRcle)

Document and submission requirements for submission of your thesis can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

As a UBC graduate student, you are required to submit an electronic copy of your final, defended thesis to UBC's online information repository ([cIRcle](#)). It will be reviewed for formatting by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS) and approved for inclusion in cIRcle. Your program cannot be closed and you will not be eligible to graduate until the content and formatting of the thesis have been officially approved and you have received an official email confirming final approval of your thesis. It is your responsibility to submit a thesis in the correct format and allow time for revisions to be complete in order to meet deadlines. Check [this page](#) for more information.

For doctoral students, please review the [final doctoral examination guide](#), which will help you to effectively plan your final doctoral examination.

Graduation

All your hard work has paid off and it is time to graduate! Please review the G+PS required tasks in order to graduate by [clicking here](#).

Events in IRES

IRES holds many different events over the course of the academic year. The central events include:

Seminar Series

The Seminar Series is a weekly lecture hosted by IRES every Thursday from September through April. Everyone is expected to attend. It's the main forum for IRES to come together, exchange ideas, and showcase research. The speakers are a mixture of external guests, IRES faculty, and RES students. There's also pizza before the seminar to

help entice you to come, so we hope to see you there! Previous seminar videos can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

Coffee Social

The IRES Coffee Social is every Tuesday (September through April) at 11am by the elevator. Come out to grab a coffee & cookie and mingle with fellow students, faculty, staff, and postdocs.

"To get the most out of the IRES community, come join us on the couches for lunch, and at the weekly coffee and seminars. There's so much to learn from others and being involved with the community makes being a grad student much more fulfilling". (IRES PhD student)

Student Symposium

The Student Symposium is a special day of student talks which takes place in April. PhD candidates and master's students in their final stages present their work, followed by an early dinner and drinks celebration. The Student Symposium is always an excellent opportunity for the IRES community to come together. Videos from our 2019 Symposium can be viewed by [clicking here](#).

Research Slam

The RES Research Slam is an opportunity for RES students and post-docs to share their research in an informal and social setting. The event is held annually, generally in the second half of the spring term, either at an off-campus or UBC venue.

IRES Working Paper Series

The IRES Working Paper Series is a peer-reviewed publication series, run for and by IRES students and faculty. It was created as a space where IRES members could publish and receive feedback on 'early versions' of articles, along with other research outputs not suited to a conventional journal article format. The IRES Working Paper Series is intended to share and celebrate research in our department, and forms part of efforts to make more of our research open-access.

Potential paper formats include: individual or team-based class projects; literature reviews; longer policy briefs; reports for government or stakeholders; or unpublished/conference papers. Submitted papers will be reviewed by relevant students or faculty who will provide feedback to the author(s) to assist them in refining their work. Accepted papers are published on the IRES website and in UBC's Open Collections database.

If you are interested in submitting your work to the IRES Working Paper Series, please consult the [website](#) for further details, or email your Working Paper Series coordinator.

RES Student Society

The [RES Student Society](#) is a group of RES student leaders who are involved in organizing student activities within the department. There are ten roles in the student society - President, Treasurer, Masters rep, PhD rep, Fisheries rep, Social coordinators, Sports committee chair, GSS rep, Seminar Series coordinators, and the Working Paper Series coordinators – with one or two volunteers for each position. In late spring the IRES student body elects new RES SS leaders; usually graduate students in the second year of their program.

What does the student society do?

The Student Society organizes all activities coordinated by students during the IRES academic year. Some of these activities include: social events (e.g. Halloween party, IRES retreat, community engagement), academic events (e.g. research slam, student symposium), and publishing (e.g. the working paper series). The active leadership of the student society members significantly enhances student life in our department. Thus, upon your arrival to IRES, think about the skills you have and how you would like to use them to give back to your department.

UBC Resources

UBC Graduate Student Society

All students registered in the Faculty of Graduate and Post-doctoral Studies are members of the GSS. They offer many different services, events, and workshops. They also have a GSS event fund for which graduate students can apply. Check them out or get involved by [clicking here](#).

Graduate Pathways to Success

The Graduate Pathways to Success program offers a plethora of personal and professional development workshops, seminars, and other activities for UBC graduate students. They have also gathered a number of different [resources](#) to help students as they complete their programs. For more information on their workshops and guides please [click here](#).

Student Support and Services

Graduate students have access to many different services on campus, including advising and counselling services, academic support services, family support, fitness and recreation, and professional development. For a more comprehensive list of services and support available to all UBC graduate and undergraduate students, please see [Student Support and Services](#).

UBC Library Research Commons

This is an important resource for graduate students, as the UBC Library [Research Commons](#) offer workshops on thesis formatting, thesis formatting templates, a thesis-formatting guide, RefWorks workshops, and information on how to use the library.

For information on UBC Library Events, please [click here](#).

Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology

The CTLT focuses on professional development in teaching and learning, integration of technology into teaching and learning, development and delivery of distance education courses and programs and other technology-enhanced learning opportunities. Their offerings for graduate students include workshops, seminars, TA training programs, the Instructional Skills Workshops, and one-on-one coaching on teaching and related topics.

For information on their programs for graduate students, please [click here](#).

UBC AMS

As a UBC student, you automatically become a member of the UBC Alma Mater Society (AMS). All students are entitled to vote in the AMS elections and take advantage of AMS resources and services.

The AMS website provides information on food and drink on campus, UBC clubs, and services provided to UBC students such as tutoring, support groups, and UBC events. Please [click here](#) for information.

UBC IT

If you have a question about IT products or support, please [click here](#).

Contact Us

If you have questions that are not answered here, please check out the [IRES FAQ page](#), or feel free to reach out to your supervisor, the RES Graduate Advisor, or IRES staff. We are all here to help!

For information on IRES Administrative Staff and their responsibilities, please see the [Administrative Staff](#) page on the IRES website.

And, as always, when in doubt, we encourage you to first [Google](#) your questions! Most program and award information is available online, and while staff are always here to help, a quick Google may be the most efficient way to get your answer.

Advice for incoming students from current RES students

"Narrow down your research question, make an outline and start writing as soon as possible! While it will all change weekly and evolve as you go, I simply cannot stress it enough: write every day! Also, don't be afraid of criticism: It will only improve your ideas and make your arguments stronger and more convincing. And lastly: Have fun! It's your story, your unique spin on the topic that nobody else might compose, so it's an opportunity as much as a privilege to contribute in your voice ideas to help make the world a better place." (IRES PhD student)

"To be productive in Grad School, I recommend that you sketch a clear timeline of when you want to achieve certain milestones for completing your program (e.g., take your comprehensive exams, finish courses). This timeline will act as the blueprint for the next 2 years (if you are a Masters student) or the next 4+ years (if you are a PhD student) of your life, and it will help you visualize the end goal by realizing is not too hard, it is just a long-term project" (IRES PhD student)

"Make sure to always have something to look forward to at the end of your working days or whenever you make your deadlines (e.g., grant applications, submit a class project). Having something nice to look forward to will help you be more productive during your work hours and will make you enjoy your well-deserved free time" (IRES PhD student)

"Create a regimented weekly or daily schedule for yourself - grad school entails more free time than the undergraduate experience, so it is important to adhere to a schedule. This way you can manage your time well." (IRES MSc student)

"Integration is the core requirement of a interdisciplinary field. So, engage with students from different areas and future collaborations may flourish" (IRES MSc Student)

"It is not uncommon for research topics to be changed throughout your academic life, it is part of evolving as an academic student." (IRES MSc Student)



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